

big setback. They will not see the economic benefits of the Doha round for a long time. We need to focus our negotiating resources on bilateral and regional deals that can provide real commercial opportunities in the short term. That means, in picking FTAs, we need to give less weight to foreign policy and more weight to economic policy.

Access to the large and vibrant U.S. market remains our best leverage in opening markets around the world. We must continue to use that leverage well.

I am disappointed in the outcome of Cancun. Like all disappointments, however, it offers lessons for the future. I hope we will learn those lessons and apply them to our trade agenda as we move forward.

NATIONAL PUBLIC LANDS DAY

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, the focus of National Public Lands Day, 2003, is to improve and conserve our Nation's forests, grasslands, plains, rivers, streams and wetlands. As last year, we can expect tens of thousands of volunteers to join our dedicated land managers in projects across the country to protect America's rich natural resources and improve our opportunities to enjoy them.

Year and year National Public Lands Day volunteers are maintaining the legacy of the Civilian Conservation Corps, CCC, who exemplified land stewardship through the thirties and into the forties. National Public Lands Day continues to serve, as did the CCCs, to build a sense of ownership for our public lands. I believe this land stewardship and sense of ownership are most critical today as many changes are occurring which are affecting our public lands. I would like to spend just a few minutes to discuss these changes, how they are affecting our public lands and what we are, and can be, doing to address these impacts.

Our first concern is fire and fuels. Many of you are well aware of the catastrophic wildfires that have been occurring across the country over the past several years. This is a direct result of changing forest conditions that have led to a large build-up of fuels. Through legislated authorities such as Stewardship Contracting, communities are working with resource professionals and private contractors to address this situation while providing jobs, products and local income. We need to continue this work together to thin our forests, reduce hazardous fuels and restore the landscape to a more balanced condition. We need to continue to work together to provide more defensible space around our communities. Through legislation such as the Healthy Forest Initiative we can facilitate such projects that will protect our communities, our watershed and other at-risk lands. By continuing to work together we can address these hazardous conditions with win-win solutions.

The introduction and spread of unwanted invasive species is another concern. Noxious weeds, non-native fish species and introduced insects are just a few examples of invasive species that can wreak havoc on our public lands and across all ownerships. Throughout the country, local governments, private landowners and public land managers are working together to build strategies and share resources to combat invasive species across broad landscapes. Working together we can develop prevention plans to keep unwanted species out and control plans to reduce or eradicate unwanted species that have already arrived. Working together we can ensure that our public lands will remain healthy habitats for the plants and animals that enrich our lives.

Another concern is that, across the country, farms, ranches and other large tracts of open land are disappearing. These open spaces are being converted into neighborhoods, shopping malls and commercial complexes. In many respects these developments bring progress and benefits. In other ways these changes are creating a ripple effect on our public lands. Uses that were once spread across open lands owned by many are now being concentrated on the open lands remaining—Public Lands. Working together we can address these issues by considering these effects prior to development. Working together we can anticipate the increased demands such development will have on public lands and prepare our land managers to meet those demands. Working together we can find ways to promote development and protect our public lands.

Our last major concern is unmanaged outdoor recreation. Americans are hard working, but in our time off we like to play as hard as we work. More and more, many of us like to recreate on our Nation's public lands. As a result the numbers of recreationists and types of recreational activities are increasing at a staggering rate. This is creating a situation that leaves land managers struggling to keep up and the public frustrated with unmet expectations. To help with this situation, across the country, volunteers, user groups and resource professionals are working together to provide trail systems that provide high quality, safe experiences for hikers, stock users and OHV riders of all ages. Senior citizens and other volunteers are providing campground host services to ensure safe, enjoyable camping experiences. And volunteers are providing interpretive services and educational programs to enhance American's understanding of their natural environment. Through efforts such as these we can keep our Public Lands special places for all Americans to use and enjoy.

Public Lands are a national resource and a national treasure. The spirit of volunteers demonstrated on National Public Lands Day and the examples I've given of communities working to-

gether with resource professionals shows what can be done when we pull together. Working together on National Public Lands Day, and every day, will ensure that these lands are here for our enjoyment for generations to come.

A BAD AMENDMENT

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, this week Americans for Gun Safety, the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence United with the Million Mom March, and Coalition to Stop Gun Violence have joined to oppose an amendment included in the House version of the Commerce, Justice, and State Department Appropriations Act that would cripple the ability of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives to enforce the Nation's gun safety laws against firearms dealers who supply guns to criminals.

The House amendment would prohibit the public release of information related to the importation and production of firearms. This would mean that the only reliable national information available on how many guns are produced in a given year, as well as type, caliber, and manufacturer, would no longer be available to the public. Further, the amendment would prohibit the public release of information related to multiple handgun sales. Under current law, dealers are required to notify the BATFE of the sale of two or more handguns to the same person within 5 business days. Eliminating the public availability of this data would make it more difficult to monitor the activities of reckless gun dealers. In addition, the amendment would prohibit the release of information related to tracing requests on guns used in crimes.

The amendment would also prohibit the BATFE from issuing a rule requiring Federal firearm licensees to submit to a physical inventory. A physical inventory recently revealed that a Tacoma, WA gun dealer could not account for the sniper rifle used by the Washington, DC area sniper and more than 200 other guns in his inventory. The amendment would also require the immediate destruction of records of approved firearms purchases and transfers generated by the National Instant Criminal Background Check System. The retention of these records has assisted law enforcement officials in trying to prevent guns from getting into the hands of criminals and identifying gun trafficking patterns.

This amendment was never the subject of hearings, is not supported by any major law enforcement organizations, is not supported by Attorney General John Ashcroft or Director of the BATFE Bradley Buckles.

I support the efforts of Americans for Gun Safety, the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence United with the Million Mom March, and Coalition to Stop Gun Violence to block this amendment. This provision could

shield reckless and negligent gun dealers from public scrutiny and weaken the BATFE's oversight and enforcement authority.

INCREASING MILITARY PAY CATEGORIES

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I have joined Senator DASCHLE in introducing a bill that would make permanent the increases in imminent danger pay and family separation allowance passed by Congress in the Fiscal Year 03 Emergency Wartime Supplemental Appropriations Act.

Last spring, when the Senate considered the Budget Resolution, it passed, by a vote of 100 to 0, an amendment I offered with Senator LANDRIEU that would have allowed for \$1 billion to cover the increase in these special pay categories.

Then, when the Senate considered the Fiscal Year 2003 Emergency Wartime Supplemental Appropriations Act, it unanimously accepted an amendment I offered with Senator STEVENS and Senator INOUE, increasing these pay categories for the remainder of the fiscal year.

The amendment we offered to the Supplemental sunset these pay increased, not because we wished to end them, but simply to allow the Armed Services Committee—the Committee of jurisdiction—to increase these pay levels in the Fiscal Year 2004 Defense Authorization bill, which it did.

Now—when soldiers are dying in Iraq and military families have been separated for many months—we hear that the Administration wishes to cut these pay increases in the Conference Committee.

The Statement of Administration Policy on the House version of the bill objects to the provision increasing both pay categories, saying it would “divert resources unnecessarily.” The statement on the Senate bill only objects to the increase in Family Separation Allowance.

When confronted with questions about why the Administration wanted to reduce these pay categories, Defense Department spokesman, Under Secretary David Chu, came up with the classic Washington non-denial denial. On August 14, Chu said: “I’d just like very quickly to put to rest what I understand has been a burgeoning rumor that somehow we are going to reduce compensation for those serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. That is not true. . . .”

“What I think you’re pointing to is one piece of very thick technical appeal document that speaks to the question do we want to extend the language Congress used in the Family Separation Allowance and Imminent Danger Pay statutes. And no, we don’t think we need to extend that language. That’s a different statement from are we going to reduce compensation for those in Iraq and Afghanistan . . .”

What do these statements mean?

Evidently the administration wants to claim that it will keep compensation the same for those serving in Iraq and Afghanistan through other pay categories, but do indeed intend to roll back the increases to imminent danger pay and family separation allowance.

This means that a soldier getting shot at fighting the war on terrorism in Yemen or the Philippines would receive less money than one who is similarly risking his or her life in Iraq. This means that a family bearing huge costs because of burdensome, long-term deployments would only be helped if the service member is deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan, but not if that same service member is deployed anywhere else in the world.

It is unfair to cut funding intended to help military families that are bearing the costs of far-flung U.S. deployments. It is unacceptable that imminent danger would be worth less in one combat zone than in another.

The bill we introduce today makes a clear statement that these pay categories should be increased permanently and should not be cut in conference.

Until these pay levels were increased in the Supplemental, an American soldier, sailor, airman, or Marine who put his or her life on the line in imminent danger only received an extra \$150 per month. My amendment increased that amount to \$225 per month—still only an acknowledgment of their courage, but an increase nonetheless.

Prior to the increase in the supplemental appropriations bill, family separation had been only \$100 per month. We succeeded in raising it to \$250 per month. These increases are only part of a normal progression of increases—for example, in 1965, imminent danger pay was \$55; \$100 in 1985, and raised to \$150 in 1991. Family separation allowance was \$30 in 1970, \$60 in 1985, \$75 in 1991, and \$100 in 1997.

Family separation allowance was originally intended to pay for things that the deployed service member would have done, like cut the grass, that the spouse may then have had to hire someone to do. That may well have been appropriate in the past, but now most families have two working spouses—sometimes two working military spouses—and the absence of one or both parent may add huge child care costs that even the increased rate is unlikely to cover.

Military spouses sometimes find that they must give up their jobs or curtail their working hours in order to take up the family responsibilities that otherwise would have been shared by the missing spouse.

Example of increased costs that families may incur when military personnel are deployed, in addition to increased child care costs include: health care costs not covered by TRICARE, for example, the cost of counseling for children having a difficult time with their parents’ deployment; costs for the family of an activated Reservist or

National Guard member to travel to mobilization briefings, which may be in another state; various communication and information-gathering costs.

I would like to quote for the RECORD from an article that appeared in *The Washington Post* on April 11, 2003, entitled “Military Families Turn to Aid Groups,” that outlines how military families have had to rely on private aid organizations to help them when their spouses are deployed. The article highlights the case of one mother, Michele Mignosa and says:

The last 18 months have brought one mishap or another to Michelle Mignosa. Her husband, Kevin, is an Air Force reservist who since Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks has been away from their Lancaster, Calif., home almost as much as he’s been there. First, there were the out-of-state trips to provide airport security. Then he was deployed to Turkey for 2½ months last spring. Now he’s in Greece with an air-refueling unit . . . And while he has been gone, the problems have piled up at home . . . Strapped for cash since giving up her part-time job because of Kevin’s frequent far-off postings, she didn’t know where the money would come from to resolve yet another problem.

I applaud the efforts of private aid groups to help military families, but I believe that it is the duty of the U.S. Government to cover more of the costs incurred because of military deployments. It should not matter to which country the service member is deployed. Cuts must not be made to funds helping military families that are bearing the costs of war, homeland security, and US military commitments abroad.

To say that pay will not decrease to those serving in Iraq or Afghanistan is ignoring the truth—rolling back family separation allowance from \$250 per month to \$100 per month will cost our military families and could be especially painful those living on the edge.

I urge my colleagues to support the bill that Senator DASCHLE and I have introduced and make a strong statement to the Defense Department that Congress will not stand for cutting imminent danger pay and family separation allowance.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

IN HONOR OF JOHNNY CASH

• Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, I rise today in support of the resolution to honor a great singer, a great songwriter, a great American, a man who truly lived the American Dream. J.R. Cash, otherwise known as “the man in black,” Johnny Cash, captivated all those who listened during a career that spanned four decades. The man in black was a man who embodied and lived the spirit of working class America and transformed that spirit into song. I speak today to honor the life and work of this Arkansas native and music legend, and I would like to thank the Senator from Tennessee, Mr. ALEXANDER, for his resolution and kind words.